



Albania's Mountain Queen: Edith Durham and the Balkans

Marcus Tanner

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Young ladies in the Victorian and Edwardian eras were not expected to travel unaccompanied, and certainly not to the remote corners of Southeast Europe, then part of the crumbling Ottoman Empire. But Edith Durham was no ordinary lady. In 1900, at the age of 37, Durham set sail for the Balkans for the first time, a trip which changed the course of her life. Her experiences kindled a profound love of the region which saw her return frequently in the following decades. She became a confidante of the King of Montenegro, ran a hospital in Macedonia and, following the outbreak of the First Balkan War in 1912, became one of the world's first female war correspondents. Her popularity in the region earned her the affectionate title 'Queen of the Mountains' and she is fondly remembered in Albania until this day. Marcus Tanner here tells the fascinating story of Durham's relationship with the Balkans, painting a vivid portrait of a remarkable, if sometimes formidable, woman.

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